(a) whether it is a fact that an alternative Highway for Sikkim apart from NH-31A has been approved previously;

(b) if so, the details of its route and progress made in this regard; and

(c) by when this alternate National Highway would be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI R.P.N. SINGH) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. A proposal for an alternate Highway from Chalsa to Gangtok, *via* Khonya more-Lhaldhaka-Tode-Rachella-Aritar-Rangpo-Ranipul along with a link to Menla has been approved by Government 'in-principle' on 28.11.2008 and an estimate of Rs.183 lakh for preparation of Detail Project Report (DPR) by Border Road Organisation has also been sanctioned by the Ministry in May, 2009. Since the proposal is at DPR stage, it is too early to indicate the date by which the proposed alternate Highway would be completed.

Funds for road projects of NH-5 and 6 in Orissa

741. SHRI BHAGIRATHI MAJHI: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has awarded any funds for the construction of the Road Projects of NH-5 and NH-6 in Orissa region;

(b) if so, the total amount sanctioned for these roads so far in the region of Orissa;

(c) if so, by when all these construction work will be completed and the details thereof; and

(d) the present progress reports of these road construction works in these areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI R.P.N. SINGH) : (a) to (d) Construction of road projects of 4-laning from Ichapuram to Balasore in an aggregate length of about 391km have been approved for Rs. 1517.86 crore. Out of this, 4-laning has already been completed in 310km length and balance work is in progress and targeted to be completed by October, 2011. The improvement works amounting to Rs. 12.61 crore have been sanctioned on Balasore-Jharpokharia section of National Highway-5 during last five years. Most of the works are completed.

4-laning of Orissa/Chhattisgarh border-Sambalpur section of National Highway-6 is being taken up under National Highway Development Project (NHDP) phase III on Build Operate and Transfer (BOT) toll mode. Total project cost is Rs. 922.50 crore. Request for Qualification (RFQ) of the bidders has been invited and the proposals are to be submitted by 15.12.2009. The improvement works amounting to Rs. 120.22 crore have been sanctioned on Sambalpur-Jamsola section of National Highway-6 during last five years. The ongoing works are in various stages of implementation and targeted to be completed latest by February, 2011.